

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-10

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O 110028Z MAY 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL DURBAN IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS:PEPR, SF, US

SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY OFFICER'S PUBLIC REMARKS
ABOUT SENATOR CLARK

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

1. OVER THE WEEKEND THE DEPARTMENT WAS INFORMED, FIRST BY REPORTER THEN BY SENATOR CLARK'S OFFICE, THAT WHILE IN IOWA RECENTLY A SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY OFFICIAL, ECONOMIC COUNSELOR JAN VAN ROOYEN, HAD PUBLICLY MADE DISPARAGING REMARKS ABOUT SENATOR CLARK. VAN ROOYEN HAD BEEN INVITED TO IOWA BY REPUBLICAN STATE SENATOR STEPHEN BISENIUS, OSTENSIBLY TO ENCOURAGE SOME TRADE BETWEEN IOWA AND SOUTH AFRICA. DURING HIS VISIT, VAN ROOYEN ALSO MET WITH IOWAN LEGISLATORS, STATE OFFICIALS AND MEMBERS OF THE IOWA
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DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION.

2. VAN ROOYEN'S VISIT WAS REPORTED IN THREE DIFFERENT IOWA NEWSPAPERS, ONE OF WHICH USED THE HEADLINE "SOUTH AFRICAN ATTACKS CLARK DURING IOWA 'TRADE' VISIT." ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS AND TO OTHER SOURCES VAN ROOYEN MISREPRESENTED SENATOR CLARK'S POSITION ON AMERICAN INVEST-

MENT IN SOUTH AFRICA, ALLEGING THAT SENATOR CLARK HAS BEEN

URGING DISINVESTMENT. VAN ROOYEN ALSO VOLUNTEERED OPINION THAT IOWANS GETTING WRONG IMPRESSION OF SOUTH AFRICA FROM "YOUR SENATOR CLARK." IN ADDITION, VAN ROOYEN ASKED IOWANS "WHY THEIR SENATOR FINDS SOUTH AFRICA SUCH A FINE PLATFORM RATHER THAN DEALING WITH THE REAL PROBLEMS THIS STATE MIGHT HAVE."

3. IN VIEW OF THE FOREGOING, UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM SUMMONED SOUTH AFRICAN MINISTER RETIEF TO DEPARTMENT AFTERNOON OF MAY 10. AT THE MEETING MR. NEWSOM SAID HE HAD BEEN ASKED TO REGISTER "OUR VERY DEEP CONCERN AND DISPLEASURE" OVER THE REMARKS MADE BY VAN ROOYEN. HE WENT ON TO RELATE HOW THE INFORMATION HAD COME TO THE DEPARTMENT'S ATTENTION AND TO RECOUNT SOME OF VAN ROOYEN'S STATEMENTS AS REPORTED IN THE PRESS. MR. NEWSOM SAID THAT VAN ROOYEN'S COMMENTS REPRESENTED "AN UNWARRANTED INTRUSION INTO A DOMESTIC POLITICAL CAMPAIGN." HE ADDED THAT HE WANTED THE SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY TO KNOW THAT WHILE THE DEPARTMENT WELCOMED TRAVEL BY DIPLOMATS AND INTEREST ON THEIR PART IN OUR ELECTORAL PROCESS, VAN ROOYEN HAD OVER-STEPPED THE MARK AND WE REGARDED WHAT HE HAD DONE IN A VERY SERIOUS LIGHT.

4. MR. RETIEF REPLIED THAT HE TOOK NOTE OF WHAT MR. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NEWSOM HAD SAID AND WOULD REPORT IT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. HE ADDED THAT HE WANTED TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH VAN ROOYEN AND TO HEAR HIS SIDE OF THE STORY. HE ASKED WHETHER THE DEPARTMENT WOULD WANT A FURTHER RESPONSE FROM THE EMBASSY. MR. NEWSOM RESPONDED THAT THIS WOULD NOT BE NECESSARY, THAT WE JUST HOPED THAT THIS WOULD BE BROUGHT TO VAN ROOYEN'S ATTENTION AND THERE WOULD BE NO REPETITION OF THIS KIND OF COMMENT.

5. FOLLOWING IS PRESS GUIDANCE MADE AVAILABLE TO DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN. "IN A DISCUSSION MAY 10 WITH MINISTER RETIEF OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY, UNDERSECRETARY NEWSOM MADE CLEAR OUR CONCERN OVER STATEMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO MR. VAN ROOYEN OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY. HE SAID THAT IF ACCURATELY QUOTED, THESE STATEMENTS REPRESENTED AN UNWARRANTED INTRUSION INTO A DOMESTIC POLITICAL CAMPAIGN. MR. RETIEF RESPONDED THAT HE TOOK NOTE OF WHAT MR. NEWSOM HAD SAID AND WOULD CONVEY IT TO HIS GOVERNMENT." VANCE

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